effect that the issue be referred to an Expert Committee and till such time the e-auction scheme be suspended. Coal India Limited filed Special Leave Petition (SLP) in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India against the Judgment of Hon'ble Guwahati High Court. In its Order dated 3rd March, 2005 and subsequently confirmed by its Order dated 2.5.2005, the Hon'ble Supreme Court permitted e-auction in NEC, subject to certain conditions. Hon'ble Supreme Court also directed that cases against e-auction pending in other High Courts also be transferred to the Hon'ble Supreme Court. The matter is *sub-judice*.

Demand for opening of Stilwell road to Myanmar

*336. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increasing demand for re-opening of the historic Stilwell road to Myanmar;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have decided to give its nod to such a proposal; and

(c) if so, the details of the same including the stipulated time period within which the proposal would materialise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The demand for reopening of Stilwell Road has been receiving the attention of the Government. However, no decision has been taken in the matter.

Use of Earthquake Resistant Technology for Buildings

†*337. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the parts of country hit by the earthquake in October, 2005 and what is the loss of life and property suffered by the States alongwith their names;

(b) to what degree Delhi is safe from earthquakes;

(c) the steps taken by the Government for compulsory use of earthquake resistant-technology in the newly built buildings;

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) by when a final decision would be taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The earthquake of 8th October, 2005 (occurred in Pakistan near Muzaffarabad), as referred to in the question, was widely felt in parts of northern States like Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Rajasthan, etc. As per the information provided by Ministry of Home Affairs, a total number of 1,338 persons have lost their lives (1336 in Jammu and Kashmir and 2 in Punjab). Over 39,000 buildings/houses are reported to have been fully damaged, while more than 71,000 were reported to be partially damaged in the State of J&K.

(b) As per the seismic zoning map published by Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS), the country has been divided into four seismic zones, namely, zone-II-V. Zone-V is considered to be more seismically active, while zone-II is the least. Accordingly to this classification, Delhi falls in zone-IV which can experience earthquake of intensity up to VIII on Modified Mercalli (MM) scale. The intensity at a given place depends on the magnitude and distance of the earthquake epicenter. Delhi can be affected by strong earthquakes occurring in the highly earthquake prone regions in Himalaya besides local earthquakes of small to moderate magnitudes. As per intensity VIII of MM scale the maximum damage that can occur to structures in Delhi due to earthquakes is as follows:

(i) Slight in specially designed structures

(ii) Considerable in ordinary buildings

(iii) Very heavy in poorly built structures

A study of microzonation of Delhi has recently been completed at 1:50,000 scale, which shows that within the city of Delhi itself the impact of an earthquake may not be uniform over the city due to varying properties of the soil and geological characteristics. However, at this stage it is difficult to say how safe is Delhi from earthquakes.

(c) to (e) Based on the present standards prescribed by BIS, the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation had issued a Notification in March, 2001 for making suitable provisions in the Building Bye-laws of Delhi Development Authority, Municipal Corporation of Delhi

and New Delhi Municipal Corporation to ensure that the buildings that are erected in Delhi provide for requisite safety features in respect of natural hazards like earthquake in accordance with the specifications/ guidelines laid down by the Bureau of Indian Standard for construction of earthquake resistant houses and strengthening/repair of the exiting houses. Recently, Model Town and Country Planning Legislation, Zoning Regulation Development Control and Building Regulation/Bye-laws for Safety against earthquakes have been prepared by an Expert Committee constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the nodal Ministry for Disaster Management in the country. The report submitted by the said Committee has already been circulated to the State Governments/Union Territories Administrations with the advice to adopt them to meet the requirements of the States. Microzonation of urban areas may lead to further refinement of building Bye-laws.

PPF for unorganised sector

*338 SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Provident Fund (PPF) covers less than one in every thousand workers in the unorganised sector;

(b) whether it is further a fact that PPF has not been very successful in attracting low income earners;

(c) whether it is also a fact that over half of PPF customers are in the taxable income bracket;

(d) what are the objectives of constituting PPF and whether the objectives have been achieved; and

(e) the steps taken to achieve the same and to make PPF a successful scheme?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) to (e) The objective of constituting the